

# NEWS



Date: July 15, 2003  
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## **Stage I Fire Restrictions Ordered in Yellowstone County and Surrounding Counties**

Due to the continuing hot weather, Stage 1 fire restrictions will go into effect on most federal, state and private lands in Big Horn, Carbon, Musselshell, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, and Yellowstone counties beginning July 18, 2003. The restrictions do not apply to the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and Gallatin National Forest lands in those counties.

Fire-fighting resources are already deployed to fight fires in Montana and across the nation. The public is asked to honor the restrictions to decrease the chance of human-caused fires and avoid resource and property damage. Anyone who causes a wildland fire intentionally or through negligence may be held accountable for damage and suppression costs.

Under Stage 1, the following acts are prohibited:

- Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire or campfire except within a developed recreation site, or improved site.
- Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.

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Exemptions to the above prohibitions are allowed for persons using a fire solely fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG; for a federal, state, or local officer, or member of an organized law enforcement, rescue, or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty; or persons with a permit or written authorization allowing the otherwise prohibited act or omission.

The Billings Area Restrictions Group coordinates fire restrictions on federal, state and private land in the Billings area. It includes representatives from the Forest Service; Bureau of Land Management; Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and the counties of Big Horn, Carbon, Musselshell, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, and Yellowstone.

For more information, please contact the Custer National Forest at 406-657-6200; Bureau of Land Management at 406-896-5013; Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation at 406-247-4400; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks at 406-247-2940; Carbon County at 406-446-1595; Stillwater County at 406-321-0204; or your local fire department or sheriff's office.

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